
A
L E T T E R
T O T H E

GENTRY, SHOP-KEEPERS, and Others, Voters
of the City of CHICHESTER.

R. R.

A
L E T T E R
T O T H E
Gentry, Shop-Keepers, and Others,
V O T E R S
O F T H E
CITY OF CHICHESTER,
B Y
An OLD TRADESMAN.

“ Nothing extenuate,
“ Nor set down aught in Malice.”

MDCCLXXXIX.

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L E T T E R, &c.

Gentlemen and Fellow Citizens,

THE strenuous electioneering Exertions of the Friends of Ministry throughout the Kingdom, and of his Grace the Duke of R—— in particular at Chichester, justify the Presumption, that the Dissolution of the present Parliament is not very distant. Impressed with this Idea, permit me to offer the few following Pages to your Consideration. Independent (thro' Industry) in my Circumstances, unconnected with Party, and unbiassed by Prejudice, I trust Impartiality will be found the leading Principle of my Examination into Facts, and Candour that of my Conclusions.

The Duke of R—— (like every other great Man) wishes to carry as much parliamentary Weight to the political Party he is attach'd to, as he possibly can. His Motives are obvious. If to Ministry, that he may have Consequence enough to procure and maintain Posts, Places, and Emoluments for himself, his Family, and his Adherents: If to Opposition, that he may strengthen that Party, by whose Exertions he hopes to remove all Obstacles to his future ambitious Views. With this Principle, his Grace finding his County Interest nearly extinguish'd, strains every Sinew, and redoubles every

every Effort at Chichester; being resolved to exclude Mr. THOMAS from his Seat in Parliament, and to return, or cause to be return'd (I should rather say) Two Members of his own, viz. Mr. LENNOX his Nephew, and our present Member Mr. STEELE. Regardless of the Peace and Comfort of the Inhabitants of the City, heedless of the Jealousies, Diffensions, and Animosities which such Conduct creates, his only Object is the Completion of *this* his grand and favorite Plan.*

Let us first consider the Justice and Reasonableness of the Duke of R——'s Pretensions to nominate Two Members for the City of Chichester: And we will next examine the Merits of the different Candidates.

To begin then with his Grace. Let us view him as a public Patron. Where are the Monuments of his Liberality and Munificence?—No where to be found. Except indeed the Stone Figure in the Fish-Market be deem'd a civic Embellishment to Chichester, which would be thought a Disgrace to Billingsgate.* As a private Man, do his extensive Donations entitle him to the Prayers and Thanksgivings of the Necessitous? Or has he

* The late Duke of R—— the Father of his Grace, used frequently to declare, that “ he thought himself sufficiently honor'd “ with the Compliment of being permitted to nominate *One* “ Member for Chichester.”

* NOTE OF THE EDITORS.

The Author must have gain'd little Information, or must have wilfully forgot the Two very beautiful whole-length Portraits, with which his Grace's Bounty and Taste have decorated the New Assembly Room.

he been known to heal the Widows Sorrow, or dry the Orphans Tear by one charitable Deed, or the *proper* Application of those Means, which both the Brilliancy of his Station, and the Magnitude of his Fortune have amply endow'd him with? I do not aver that his Grace has never done a generous Act; I only lament it has been so private, that the Breath of Rumour has not even whisper'd it. It is true he subscribes annually the enormous Sum of Two Pounds and Two Shillings towards the Public Dispensary: an Institution worthy of the most liberal Support, establish'd to assuage the Sufferings of our Fellow-Creatures, to relieve the indigent Sick in the City and Environs of Chichester. One Act of Benevolence worthy to be recorded (I beg his Grace's Pardon). had almost escap'd my Memory, viz. The bestowing on the Poor, during a very severe Winter, the worn-out Blankets of the Suffex Militia. But I will not further investigate his Grace's Humanity; it may lead to such inevitable Conclusions as my Declaration of Impartiality makes me wish to avoid. I must confess, however, that whatever his Grace's Conduct may have been in many Respects, his Regard for the Welfare of the Corporation, at least, is unequivocal. He convinced them that it was their Interest to erect a Crane at *Dell-Key* at *their* Expence, when *he* had a large Cargo of Portland Stone to land for his own Use, and another of Timber to export. So just and plausible were his Arguments, that the Corporation did not hesitate, and the Crane was erected as his Grace desired.

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Let us now turn to the Favors which his Grace has conferr'd on Individuals. They are great and manifold indeed. No Father can lament the Absence of his Children from their Studies, or Employments, to waste their Time in such idle Pursuits, as the Sports of the Field; for if *Qualified*—they immediately receive Threats and Notices without End; if *Unqualified*—Prosecutions without Number. And such is his Grace's Attention to the Health of my Fellow-Citizens, that not One of us is allow'd to touch Hare, Partridge, or Pheasant, except three or four particular Friends, whose Digestions are known to be extraordinarily good. If I have mistated one single Fact in this, the general, Tenor of his Grace's Conduct towards the Gentry of Chichester, I call upon his most sanguine Friends to contradict me. But if these Facts are admitted, or not disproved, what other Conclusion can I draw, but that he has no Pretension whatever to their Support. We next come to the Tradesmen and Shop-keepers. Let us examine what Claims the Duke of R—— has on them. Are the Sums which he annually expends amongst them, considerable enough, to entitle him to expect that they should vote for the Two Members of his Choice? I answer NO! Few indeed are the Shops which partake of that small Portion of his ample Fortune which he allots to the City of Chichester. Workmen of almost every Denomination are constantly kept in Employ at Goodwood, to work

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up Materials of all Sorts which he imports himself.* And if Report be true, the few Tradesmen who can boast of his Grace's Custom, have not much Reason to rejoice, as Punctuality, in the Discharge of his Bills, is by no means his distinguishing Principle. Lastly, let me ask, what Compliment is due to him from the lower Class of Voters; I dare pronounce, NONE. He and his Partizans have stamp'd them with the meanest of Epithets, and on every Occasion treated them as People whose Situation was so abject, as to exclude them the Privilege of a FREE CHOICE, or even the Shadow of a Claim to the BIRTHRIGHTS of ENGLISHMEN.

When we coolly reflect on the foregoing State of Facts, we cannot but deem his Grace's Pretensions an Insult, and his Exertions Cruelty and Oppression.

We will now turn to the Three Candidates, and fairly investigate their Characters.

Of Mr. LENNOX little can be said, because little is known. He is young, and without any Knowledge or Experience; but is reputed an *Honest Fellow*, good-natur'd, and open hearted. I will grant then, (to prove that I have no Animosity against his Grace) that if any Compliment should be paid to him, it may as well be done

*The Author alludes to Glass, Paint, Iron, and in short every other Article; and begs to refer his Readers to his Grace's New Dog Kennel, the Inspection of which, will prove what he here asserts, no doubt much to the Satisfaction of Mr. ROBINS, the Glazier, and many others.

done in the Person of his Nephew, and Mr. LENNOX be deem'd a proper Representative for Chichester.

Our next Candidate is Mr. STEELE. Tho' I voted for him at the Two last Elections, I must now contend that he is every Way unfit to be again our Representative. I would not presume to make this bold Assertion, if I had not good and solid Grounds to support it. Mr. STEELE came first into Parliament under the Sanction and Patronage of the Duke of R——. Neither his Station, his Fortune, or his Abilities entitled him to expect the Honor that Patronage procured him. At his second Election he became more bold, and seem'd to claim a certain Degree of personal, *independent* Interest, no doubt from the comparative Situation of his Colleague. The Event of the Election should have convinced him of his Error, for, at the Close of the Poll, he had fewer Votes than Mr. THOMAS, notwithstanding the Exertions of his Patron, and the sacred Manner in which he pledged himself to the Citizens of Chichester, “ THAT
“ ON EVERY OCCASION HE WOULD IMPLICITLY OBEY
“ THE INSTRUCTIONS OF HIS CONSTITUENTS.” How far he has kept that Promise, every Inhabitant of Chichester knows as well as myself. Not long after he was return'd a second Time to Parliament, he was positively directed by those Constituents, whose Instructions he had solemnly engaged should rule his political Conduct, to oppose the Shop Tax. How did he act on the Occasion? In open Contempt of their Interests, in direct Opposition

to their Instructions, and in positive Violation of his Promise, he supported the Measure he was directed to oppose; and that his Constituents might have no Doubts on the Subject, he has uniformly continued so to do four successive Sessions that the Question has been agitated. Hence it is evident, that Mr. STEELE, being dependent on the Minister, is an improper Person to be intrusted with your RIGHTS and LIBERTIES; for, whenever the *Minister's* Views clash with *your* Interests, he must sacrifice his Constituents to maintain his Place: Nor does he hesitate a Moment, for your Instructions were ~~thrown~~ thrown into the Fire, and the Minister's Will was obey'd. Mr. PITT may, perhaps, before the Dissolution of Parliament, make a Virtue of Necessity, and consent to repeal that odious Tax: Mr. STEELE will no doubt follow the Example, and in that Case, at the next Election, may venture to assume some Credit for so doing. But the Voters of Chichester must feel too much Indignation at his Conduct, not to resent it. He had better, then, take a Hint from an old Citizen, and if he *must be* in Parliament, persuade Mr. PITT to give him a Treasury Borough, restoring Chichester to Peace and Tranquility, and leaving it to be represented (as it ever should) by Gentlemen who are perfectly Independent both in Principle and Fortune.

Of the Third Candidate, Mr. THOMAS, I have little to say. His Conduct will speak for itself. In private Life he is sincere, friendly, generous, and charitable. Nor is
his

his Benevolence confin'd to Party, but extends where'er the Hand of Affluence can heal the Wounds of Poverty or Affliction.

His publick Conduct as Representative for Chichester claims our warmest Acknowledgments. Heedless of his own, or his Family's Interest, divested of all private Views, he has stedfastly fulfilled every Engagment to which he pledged himself, when he was by you return'd to Parliament. Your Interests alone have directed his political Conduct; and tho' he has supported the Administration of Mr. PITT, in all Measures which could possibly contribute to the publick Good, he nobly resisted and voted against the Shop Tax, and the Fortification Bill, convinced no Doubt of the Partiality and Oppression of the One, and of the pernicious Tendency of the other, which must inevitably have loaded you with additional Taxes, ruined the Navy, and ultimately annihilated the Trade of Great Britain.

After this short and faithful Exposition of Facts, which I beg to recommend to the serious Consideration of my Fellow-Citizens, I take my Leave of you in the full Hope and Persuasion that “ *Virtue will meet its due Reward.*”

An Old Tradesman.

Chichester, March 1789.

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